



Spanish Presidency of the European Union

**OSCE Permanent Council No. 808
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EU statement on the sixty-fifth anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe

The European Union would like to thank the Chairmanship in Office for including this item in the Agenda of today's Permanent Council. 8 and 9 of May commemorate the end of the battles of the Second World War in Europe, and mark, as established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2004, a time of remembrance and reconciliation, an occasion to pay tribute to all victims of the 1939-45 war.

As our Ministers stated in Athens: "We mourn all people who lost their lives as victims of the war, the Holocaust, occupations and acts of repression. We honour veterans and all those who fought for the victory of humanity against fascism, dictatorship, oppression and aggression".

Mr Chairman,

In the immediate aftermath of this confrontation, the United Nations was established to save succeeding generations from the

scourge of war, to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, to establish conditions under which justice and respect for international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

However, we have to remember that the Second World War led to a division of Europe which lasted for half a century. For many countries that meant lack of freedom, democracy and the rule of law, as well as economic underdevelopment. This division is no longer. The EU and the CSCE/OSCE played a very important role in making possible the reunification of the continent. In addition, the enlargement of the European Union has contributed to the security of Europe, by incorporating a growing number of countries and citizens to an area of freedom, stability, solidarity and prosperity. We also recognise the critical role played by the transatlantic partnership in European integration and security.

Mr. Chairman,

We can be proud of our achievements. Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure, nor so free; but much remains to be done. We now need to overcome the legacy of the Cold War, of decades of mistrust and antagonism; we need to take into account the concerns and perceptions of all the parties in order to build and reinforce confidence among participating States.

We are convinced that through already ongoing multilateral dialogue and cooperation we will achieve this aim, and thus contribute to our common goal of a comprehensive, inclusive and

indivisible security for Europe to prevent any conflict, to continue to relegate the sheer possibility of a major war in Europe to the domain of the unthinkable and to jointly build upon this peace for the freedom and welfare of our citizens.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Los países candidatos TURQUÍA, CROACIA* y la ANTIGUA REPÚBLICA YUGOSLAVA DE MACEDONIA*, los países del Proceso de Estabilización y Asociación y los países candidatos potenciales, ALBANIA, BOSNIA Y HERZEGOVINA, MONTENEGRO y SERBIA, los países de la Asociación Europea de Libre Comercio y los miembros del Espacio Económico Europeo, ISLANDIA, LIECHTENSTEIN y NORUEGA, al igual que UCRANIA se suman a esta declaración.

*Croacia y la Antigua República Yugoslava de Macedonia siguen perteneciendo al proceso de Estabilización y Asociación.